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ABSTRACT

A strategy to assist in community development can help rural schools in rapidly growing areas meet the changing educational needs of their communities. Such a strategy should include gathering information about anticipated changes in the size and composition of the school population in order to plan for adequate staff and facilities. Planning for growth should also involve the consideration of service arrangements which best serve the community's needs, especially as community members begin to respond to four major growth-related changes: superinflation, service demands in excess of service capabilities, change in socio-cultural structure, and increased people problems, such as oldtimer-newcomer conflicts. Schools can be a logical catalyst for initiating important service arrangements such as consultation with mental health and social service agencies. Schools can also help foster the formation of formal interagency networks which in turn support community development as a whole. As rapid growth occurs in the rural community, schools can provide leadership and decision making simulations to improve the community's ability to respond to growth-related change. Rural schools can build around the unique educational needs of different age groups, including adults and the elderly, to address the educational needs of the entire community. (SB)

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Meeting Educational Needs in Rural Communities Confronting Rapid Growth

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MEETING EDUCATIONAL NEEDS IN RURAL COMMUNITIES CONFRONTING RAPID GROWTH

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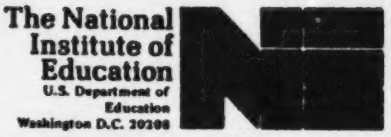

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I. INTRODUCTION: RAPID GROWTH IN SMALL COMMUNITIES

During the 1970's rural communities in all regions of the United States experienced the beginnings of a population turnaround (Beale, 1975; 1977). Migration of people to non-metropolitan areas has altered historical patterns of population stability or decline which characterized small towns and rural communities during the previous decade. Multiple sources of rapid growth confront contemporary small rural communities, including population migration from metropolitan areas, energy development, rural industrialization, and recreation or resort development.

In many communities the turnaround has been associated with hopes for a rural renaissance and small town revitalization (Morrison and Wheeler, 1976). Further experience with the phenomenon of migration to non-metropolitan areas has, however, led to the accumulation of a substantial body of information concerning the multiple and often unanticipated changes which accompany rapid population and economic growth. Growth has brought both benefits and problems to rural communities and to schools which serve these communities.

What constitutes rapid growth and change associated with the problems of personal, social, cultural and institutional adjustment in small communities? In quantitative terms, a study of energy-impacted communities in Wyoming indicated that an annual population growth rate of 10 percent places a strain on a small community's capacity to provide services to its residents, and a growth rate of 15 percent a year causes serious breakdowns in service-providing capabilities of both local and regional institutions (Denver Research Institute, 1974). A rate of population growth exceeding 10 percent per year

typically is considered the point at which providing services and adapting to change becomes problematic in small communities.

In many areas throughout the United States, growth rates far in excess of this 10-percent-a-year threshold have been reported. For communities adjacent to energy development projects, population growth often exceeds 25 percent a year (Gilmore, 1976). Extreme examples of the scope of rapid growth confronting small communities include Craig, Colorado, whose population grew 200 percent in seven years (Cortese and Jones, 1977) and Rio Blanco and Garifeld counties in Colorado, where development of proposed oil shale plants could produce a population increase from the current 75,000 to 1,500,000 residents (Kelly, 1980). In addition, where much of the population growth results from the "boom" construction phase of energy or industrial development, an equally rapid period of population and economic decline, or "bust," can be anticipated to follow the period of rapid growth.

Although energy-impacted communities represent a type of extremely rapid growth, the population turnaround has occurred in rural communities throughout the United States. Regions with rural counties experiencing the highest rates of population growth during the period 1970-75 included the Southwest, the Intermountain West, the Far West, parts of Florida, the Upper Great Lakes, Central Texas, and the Ozarks (Ross and Green, 1979). The 1980 Census is expected to indicate even more widespread population growth in rural communities. Although economic factors account for population growth in some communities, non-economic factors such as search for an improved quality of life are also associated with population migration to non-metropolitan areas (Ploch, 1978; DeJong and Humphrey, 1976).

II. PLANNING FOR THE IMPACTS OF RAPID GROWTH

Need for Establishing a Community Planning Process

Experience with rapid growth in small communities has indicated the importance of community involvement in assessment and planning processes. Community planning can:1) provide accurate information concerning the scope or quantitative impacts of population growth, or a cycle of population growth and decline, over a period of time; 2) provide a comprehensive picture of the multiple changes--economic, institutional, individual, social, and cultural--which the community may experience; and 3) establish a process which involves the community in critical decisions regarding its future rather than instilling a sense of distrust, alienation, and feelings that the future of the community has come under the control of powerful outside forces (Olson, 1980; Hawkins, 1980). Establishing an assessment and planning process which meets these criteria can be extremely difficult in rural communities experiencing rapid growth (Bleiker, 1980). Lack of needed information and information lag have been identified as critical problems confronting growth-impacted rural schools (Cortese and Jones, 1977). The complexity of changes which accompany rapid growth has given rise to the newly emerging field of social impact assessment, but many needs may not be anticipated by a particular local community.

Establishing an effective process for community participation and decision making can also be difficult. Moen (1980) has reported encountering a high level of fatalism in her studies of communities impacted by energy development. Graber (1974) has noted the potential for oldtimer-newcomer conflicts to emerge in the planning process. Distorted information and the

absence of needed, accurate information can lead to loss of trust and severe disruption of informal networks of communication and mutual support which characterize established rural communities. New types of community and regional planning networks are, however, emerging in rural communities confronting rapid growth (Gold, 1979; Gerlach, 1976; Bradshaw and Blakely, 1979).

Changes in the Size and Composition of the Rural School

Rural schools are impacted by rapid growth both directly, through changes in the size and composition of the student population and, indirectly, through community changes which affect educational performance of students and staff, create new educational needs for a variety of groups, and alter community expectations of and support for educational activities. A beginning point of entry into the assessment and planning process is the attempt by rural school personnel to obtain accurate information concerning changes in the size and composition of the student population which will accompany rapid growth and development. Inadequate planning and funding for rural schools confronting rapid growth is common and frequently results in problems such as double shifts, overcrowded classes, and the need to use any available meeting space in the community as a classroom.

Types of questions for which answers are needed by school personnel, as well as by community leaders and residents, include the following:

1. What types of information can be used to predict the anticipated size of the student population?

In order to predict the size of the student population with accuracy, information concerning both the size and composition of newcomer families

must be obtained. Experiences of communities confronting similar types of rapid growth are valuable sources of data. In general, rapid growth associated with population migration from metropolitan areas involves newcomer families over age 25, many of whom have school-age children (Tucker, 1976), and older persons moving to rural areas in conjunction with retirement plans (Beale and Fuguitt, 1976).

When newcomers are part of a construction work force, estimating the size of the school population becomes more difficult. Families may or may not accompany the construction work force. During the construction of the Alaska pipeline, projected increases in school enrollment did not occur, although schools had acquired portable classrooms and hired additional staff (Dixon, 1978). In contrast, the community of Colstrip, Montana, underestimated the number of newcomer families and held classes in a shopping center until a new grammar school could be built. The size of a newcomer work force may itself be difficult to predict because of community assumptions and expectations that jobs will be filled by local residents.

2. What are the anticipated changes in the size of the student population over a period of time?

One of the first and most difficult tasks in the planning process is to specify the appropriate time frame during which rapid growth, or a cycle of growth and decline, is expected to occur. Lack of information concerning the duration of rapid growth can lead to community support for the use of temporary educational facilities, rather than new construction, if it is assumed that newcomers are transient. If a boom-bust process of population growth and decline is anticipated, planning must include arrangements for both personnel expansion and eventual reduction.

3. Are there ways to lessen the impact of rapid increase in the student population?

Possible strategies for reducing negative impacts of rapid growth include hiring as many local residents as possible where growth is related to rural industrialization and energy development and spreading out the time period over which rapid growth will occur.

4. What will be the rate of turnover in the student population?

A common problem in schools confronting rapid growth is the high rate of mobility of the student population. Some students may enter and leave before their records even arrive from another school. High turnover may require additional school support staff.

5. How will the student population change in terms of socio-economic and cultural diversity?

Increased diversity of the student population is a potential positive impact of rapid growth which has occurred in many rural communities. If tendencies toward newcomer-oldtimer conflict are overcome, benefits of growth can include curriculum expansion related to needs and interests of a more diverse student body. These benefits require investment in planning and resources for curriculum enrichment.

6. What types of financial support are needed in order to meet the needs of the changing student population?

Financial impacts of rapid growth on the community educational system must be carefully identified. Schools may be faced with needs for new construction, new and diversified faculty, additional support staff, and expanded transportation arrangements. Developing adequate financial support may include dealing with limitations such as a ceiling on bonded indebtedness,

securing passage of bond issues--a particular problem in school districts where all communities are not equally affected by rapid growth impacts, obtaining financial assistance through state legislation, and negotiating for funding with corporations and federal government agencies.

Community Changes--Impacts on Educational Needs and Services

Rapid growth in small, rural communities sets in motion a complex change process involving more than size of population. Many impacts are more qualitative than quantitative and have been identified through intensive observation by outside researchers or through accounts of rural residents coping with rapid growth.

Davenport and Davenport (1979) and Morris and Morris (1980) have noted an important feature of the rapid growth process in small rural communities--a new balance of strains and gains, or costs and benefits, is introduced into the community. Growth can bring benefits, but it is also associated with individual stress, community conflict, and institutional strain. The costs and benefits of growth will be different for various groups and institutions within the community. Awareness of this differential distribution of costs and benefits has resulted in the concept of vulnerable groups within the community, groups which have the least to gain and the most to lose as a consequence of rapid growth and which have fewest resources for dealing with the stress and change associated with rapid growth.

School personnel involved in planning for and coping with rapid growth represent the interests of children and youth, vulnerable groups which experience many stresses and strains during the process of community change and which may have few coping resources. The school system may itself

experience a situation of increased demands with inadequate financial and personnel resources. Thus, school personnel need to increase community awareness of social and human costs which must be addressed in addition to economic benefits which may accompany rapid growth.

A typology of major impacts of rapid growth identified by researchers and the consequences of these impacts for rural education is presented in Table 1. Major impacts include superinflation, service demands which exceed service capacities, increased people problems associated with rapid change, and major changes in community culture and social structure. As noted in the table, increased people problems is an impact usually found in rural communities experiencing a combination of population growth and rapid economic development, such as recreation or energy-impacted communities. The other three types of impacts listed in the table have been reported for rural communities experiencing rapid population growth, whether or not such growth is accompanied by rapid economic development.

Superinflation

One major area of impact is change in the economy of the rural community. Superinflation occurs when demand increases for a limited supply of community services, such as housing. This economic condition may have a number of consequences for the community's educational system. Taxpayer revolts may occur as residents struggle to cope with rising prices. Housing shortages have made recruitment of new teachers difficult. Higher pay scales for teachers have been instituted in some rapid growth communities, but often teachers seek new, higher paying employment in the area. High staff turnover in the schools may result.

Table 1

Major Impacts of Rapid Growth and Their Effects on the School System

Types of Major Impacts in Rapid Growth Communities[1]	Effects of Major Impacts on the School System
Superinflation	Taxpayer revolts resulting in defeat of school bond issues. Housing shortages make recruitment of new teachers difficult. Teachers forced to seek higher paying employment which results in staff turnover.
Service demands exceed service capacities	Double shifts and overcrowding. Lack of after-school care for children.
Increased people problems associated with rapid change[2]	Burnout of professional staff. Increased family problems, lack of adequate parenting, child abuse. Increased alcohol and substance abuse. Increased juvenile delinquency.
Major changes in community culture and social structure	Replacement of local leadership. Oldtimer-newcomer bifurcation often played out in the school setting. "Rip-off mentality" leads to youth devaluing education, higher dropout rates. Changes in student and faculty relationships result from newcomer influx and from students taking on adult responsibilities. Students may be isolated by community.

[1] This portion of the table is adapted from Joseph and Judith A. Davenport, eds., The Boom Town: Problems and Promises in the Energy Vortex. Laramie, Wyoming: University of Wyoming, 1980.

[2] Impacts associated primarily with a combination of population and economic growth.

Service Demands Exceed Capacities

The situation of service demands exceeding service capacities results from both rapid increase in population and changing expectations within the community. Local administrative and elected officials, in particular, have noted that community residents coping with rapid growth become more demanding of local services. Problems which before were handled informally now are turned over to service agencies. Administrators and elected officials are expected to "deal with the crisis." Supply-demand imbalances within the school system itself can lead to double shifts and overcrowding. Another important service shortage which influences educational performance is lack of after-school care for children.

People Problems

A third type of impact found in small communities experiencing rapid growth is an increase in people problems, or problems in living, such as suicide, family violence, divorce and desertion, alcohol and substance abuse (Kohrs, 1974). Increases in family problems, domestic violence, lack of adequate parenting, child abuse and neglect have major consequences for children's social, intellectual, and emotional development and for school-family relationships which support the educational process. Several factors have been identified as contributing to the increase in people problems. High levels of stress which exceed individual coping skills and are associated with need for utilization of mental health services (Holmes and Rahe, 1967) have been reported in a study of rapid growth communities (Weisz, 1979). The rate and multiple nature of change frequently result in high levels of stress which exceed residents' ability to adapt to new life circumstances. A grief reaction to rapid change, expressed by statements such as, "Everything I've

known all my life is gone," may accentuate coping difficulties.

Isolation of newcomers also contributes to the increase in people problems. Because of housing shortages or community inclination to confine newcomers to a particular area, new housing developments may consist of mobile home parks constructed on the outskirts of town. Families may be crowded together with few opportunities for participation in social or recreational activities. A third causal factor associated with increases in people problems is family difficulties encountered when both parents work, often during evening hours, and adequate child care is not available.

While people problems increase in rapid growth communities, the ability of informal support systems and public services to deal with people problems may decline simultaneously. Teachers may no longer be closely acquainted with students and their families. Many problems can no longer be handled on an informal basis. As staff become overloaded in dealing with large numbers of people problems, burnout and high rates of staff turnover may occur. Dixon (1978) has noted the phenomenon of "compassion fatigue" in her study of the trans-Alaska pipeline impacts. Such fatigue was associated with ministers' withdrawal from participation in community-wide planning activities. Decline in the ability of informal support systems to handle problems related to alcohol and substance abuse also has been reported (Lantz and McKeown, 1979; Lantz, Sackett, and Halpern, 1980).

Changes in Social Structure

Major changes in cultural and social systems accompany rapid growth in small rural communities. Residents' sense of these changes is expressed in statements such as, "Our way of life is disappearing," or "I used to know everyone I saw on the streets. Now when I go into town there

is hardly anyone I know." Changes in social structure--roles and role relationships--of rapid growth communities take the following forms which have been identified by Cortese and Jones (1977). Ways in which these changes in role relationships may alter the social structure of the rural school include:

1) Creation of new roles. Schools must develop new positions, such as assistant principal; new types of teachers must be hired for a more differentiated curriculum; and counselors or school social workers may be hired to deal with student needs and school-family relationships.

2) Creation of more positions within existing roles. More teachers and clerical staff may be hired.

3) Differentiation of roles. Teachers may teach a smaller number of subjects. Conversely, they may be teaching with a more diverse student body and spending more time coping with paperwork and increased people problems. Thus, teacher roles may become both more generalized and more specialized.

4) Redefinition of old roles. Responsibilities of the school administrator may expand to include work with new, diversified staff and groups of parents; negotiation with new state, federal, and corporate funding sources; managing community controversy; and increased negotiation with teacher unions and organizations.

5) Replacement of existing roles. High staff and administrative turnover is common for schools in rapid growth communities.

Similar types of role changes take place for students. Turnover increases within the student body. Students may assume work roles and additional family responsibilities if both parents are employed. These changes result in altered student-student and student-teacher relationships. Students may expect greater involvement in educational planning and decision making.

Changes in Culture: The Problem of Bifurcation

Newcomer-Oldtimer Interaction. Rapid growth is accompanied by a significant cultural change within the rural community. As large numbers of newcomers move into what were previously established rural communities with a previous history of cultural stability and little or no population growth, a we-they split may occur between oldtimers and newcomers. Observers of rural community change commonly refer to this cleavage as the problem of "boom town bifurcation" (Davenport and Davenport, 1980; Massey and Lewis, 1979). The following differences in newcomer and oldtimer perspectives which can become a source of bifurcation in rural communities confronting rapid growth have been identified by Morris and Morris (1980) and are summarized in Table 2. Additional bifurcation issues may occur when newcomer and oldtimer populations differ substantially in terms of age, income level, cultural background, and language.

Oldtimer and newcomer differences in perspectives often influence the demands placed upon schools by residents in rapid growth communities and create the potential for conflict and change as the school attempts to respond to these demands. Oldtimers and newcomers may support different levels of citizen involvement in daily school operations (Smith, 1978). One consequence of the we-they split has been taxpayer revolts in which newcomers refused to support school bond issues because they desired greater participation in community decision making regarding schools (Hennigh, 1978). Ross and Green (1980) studied a rapid growth community in which a group of newcomer parents attempted to transfer their children to the neighboring school district. Conflicts concerning equity in taxation and local political representation may be accentuated when a portion of a county or school district is experiencing rapid growth while other parts are not.

Table 2

Comparison of Newcomer and Oldtimer Perspectives in Rural Communities Confronting Issues of Rapid Growth

Community Issues	Newcomer Perspectives	Oldtimer Perspectives
1. School Financing	Schools are overcrowded. May have to go on double shifts.	Rising taxes are a concern for persons with fixed incomes. Would vote down a school levy.
2. Community Leadership	New leadership is needed in the community. Old-timer community leaders are insensitive to concerns of newcomers.	Community leaders are old friends who understand my concerns and whom I like and trust. I resent newcomers trying to push them out.
3. Structure of Social Services	The community lacks social and health services in comparison with urban areas. There is a need for professional services.	Local residents are used to doing for themselves, mutual aid relationships with friends and neighbors. Do not want to give up helping networks and replace them entirely with outside professionals.
4. Pace of Life	Used to faster pace. Community seems to be dragging its feet, not making decisions fast enough. Community resists change.	Used to slower pace. Feel unable to cope with rapid change. Newcomers are impatient. They want everything "right now."
5. Rising Prices	Newcomers are being short-changed. We get overpriced housing, food and clothing.	Oldtimers are being short-changed. We get rising prices and taxes.

Table 2

(Continued)

Community Issues	Newcomer Perspectives	Oldtimer Perspectives
6. Isolation	Feel isolated from community life. Community networks, clubs, and churches are closed to outsiders. Feel that I don't know anyone. Community lacks social and recreational activities.	Feel the need to hang on to some established institutions, keep them off limits to outsiders. Feel isolated. Used to know everyone's name. Now town is full of strangers.
7. Business	Need to modernize stores, have greater variety and quality of merchandise. Need more efficient service.	Need to keep friendly, informal atmosphere of downtown stores which serve as gathering places for residents.
8. Community Membership	Newcomers are here because of job opportunities or wanting to live a different kind of life. Not sure if I will stay, settle down in community. Feel used by community which wanted us to come in order to have growth but doesn't really want us to be part of the community. Oldtimers want us to leave.	This is my home. I don't want to leave. I have helped to create this community and don't want the things I have helped to build to be lost. Newcomers downgrade local people and practices. They will leave when a better job comes along.

Newcomers and oldtimers may have different expectations concerning persons in the community who occupy positions of leadership, including school administrators. Newcomers may expect an administrative style emphasizing rational decision making, efficiency, and a professional knowledge base. Oldtimers may expect decision making based on personal responsiveness to their needs and concerns. Both groups may make greater demands

upon persons in leadership positions to respond to community needs. High turnover of persons occupying leadership positions and replacement of local leaders with outside professionals have been reported in rapid growth communities (Cortese and Jones, 1977). Some communities studied by Cortese and Jones reported a 100 percent turnover in community political leaders and administrators. School principals and district superintendents have resigned voluntarily or under pressure as a consequence of increased community demands on schools or community bifurcation (Hennigh, 1978).

While oldtimer-newcomer differences in expectations concerning curriculum content can become a source of community conflict, positive outcomes have resulted for the educational system (Ploch, 1978). Newcomers with school-age children have supported curriculum diversity and addition of staff and have organized school clubs and activities (Pietens, 1979; Davenport and Davenport, 1980). Although conflicts often occur in the short run, newcomers can and do provide new ideas and community support for schools which can have positive consequences over longer periods of time. Newcomer-oldtimer bifurcation is a major potential problem confronting rural schools in rapid growth communities. Since the school system provides an accessible forum for discussion of important community concerns and since all residents have a stake in the community's educational system, schools become a primary point of newcomer-oldtimer contact. Bifurcation creates a social structure within the community in which issues such as expanded course offerings can become particularly difficult to resolve. At the same time, the school can provide leadership and opportunities for dealing with newcomer-oldtimer bifurcation both within the student body and in school-community relationships. It can become a major community resource for dealing with bifurcation problems.

Changes in Student Culture. One type of social structural change associated with energy-impacted communities experiencing rapid rates of both population and economic growth is the increased assumption of adult work and family responsibilities by teenagers. Employment opportunities in the energy construction industry may become available to young persons. Community services and businesses seek to employ teenagers, often in positions of supervisory-level responsibility. If both family members work at jobs requiring evening shifts and long-distance commuting, teenagers often must assume substantial family responsibilities. Thus integrated into the economy of the boom town, teenagers are in a position to observe and participate in a cash-flow economy involving rapid exchange of large amounts of money.

This change in the structure of teenage roles has been associated with several different types of impacts on the educational system. Dropout rates may increase as students find high-paying employment within the energy construction industry. Increased family responsibilities make it difficult for students to participate in after-school activities and to keep up with assignments. Since students are taking on more adult roles within the family and community economy, they often expect to assume more responsibility for planning and decision making within the school system. The experience of adult socialization for teenagers may carry over to the classroom and produce changes in student-faculty relationships.

Finally, students and school systems both must confront changes in cultural values which accompany participation in the economy of the community. Dixon (1978) in her study of the impacts of Alaska oil pipeline construction noted the problem of a "rip-off mentality" growing among community teenagers. Although this problem is not unique to rapid growth communities, it seems to

be accentuated by exposure to the visible, rapid accumulation and exchange of money which occurs in such settings. Consequences of the rip-off mentality can include increased juvenile delinquency, rising dropout rates, and a general devaluing of education in relation to money-earning opportunities for community youth. However, the rip-off mentality is a potential impact which affects students in varying ways and degrees. Opportunity for part-time employment does provide many students with valuable work experience. Many accumulate savings for needs such as a college education, marriage, and living on their own. Nevertheless, students and schools are exposed to value dilemmas which accompany increased rates of getting and spending, often involving large amounts of money, and choices among educational and employment opportunities in rural communities impacted by rapid economic development.

III. COPING WITH RAPID GROWTH IN RURAL COMMUNITIES--THE SCHOOL AS A CATALYST FOR USE OF CONSULTATION

Rapid growth of the student population which exceeds service capabilities, increased paperwork and adjustments resulting from student-body turnover, lack of continuity associated with turnover of faculty and support staff, and increased stress and problems in living experienced by students and their families can severely limit the capacity of schools to respond to human welfare and educational needs in the rapidly growing rural community. Planning for the impact of rapid growth should involve consideration of service arrangements which can respond most effectively to these needs in a particular community. Rapid growth of rural communities is accompanied by need for changes in the organization of service delivery systems. One service arrangement which should be considered by rural schools is the use of

consultation, particularly with mental health and social service agencies. Many such agencies are mandated to provide consultation- and prevention-oriented community services. Weisz (1977) has concluded that mental health services must provide prevention-oriented services such as school consultation in rapid growth communities. Without such preventive efforts, mental health agencies will be overwhelmed with persons whose problems have become major crises requiring more intensive intervention.

The school system is a logical catalyst for initiating or expanding mental health and social services consultation in rapid growth communities. Some consultation activities may have been established previously through school-sponsored activities such as parent-effectiveness training or ALATEEN groups for students. During periods of rapid growth, consultation with mental health and social service resources can provide needed support to already overburdened teachers.

Objectives of Consultation

Consultation between schools and mental health or social service agencies might have several objectives, including:

1) planning services to children and families, such as housing assistance or counseling, which could be provided either on site by mental health and social service personnel or through a school-social service referral process;

2) developing special counseling activities within the school, such as student group sessions focusing on coping with stress, family living skills, managing new work and family responsibilities;

3) identifying mechanisms through which students can be involved in planning for rapid growth within the school and can deal with the ongoing

stresses and grieving processes which accompany rapid growth;

4) training school personnel in identification of potential child abuse and neglect situations and establishing clear mechanisms for referral to appropriate social service agencies;

5) planning communication strategies such as use of the school newsletter or announcements at parents' association meetings to inform students and families of the availability of social and health programs and services within the school and the community;

6) establishing classes and activities which can build communication and friendship between oldtimer and newcomer students, thus reducing bifurcation within the student body. Examples of such activities might include peer counseling, tutoring, and Big Brother/Big Sister programs;

7) establishing programs such as Foster Grandparents which link students to older community residents, serve the dual purposes of providing support and friendship to students and families and of building community support for schools, and can be used to build needed school-community links both in rural areas where older citizens comprise a high proportion of longtime residents and in communities in which older residents comprise a high proportion of the newcomer population;

8) establishing referral procedures through which emergency crisis intervention can be provided by mental health and social service agencies;

9) developing team approaches to work with children and families;

10) establishing classes for parents in parenting, family living skills, and coping with stress, which can prevent the development of more serious family problems and which provide integrative leadership roles for

parents--publicity and referral through schools is an excellent mechanism for reaching parents needing such services, and classes can be initiated by school, mental health, or social service personnel but can be maintained by parents themselves; and

11) providing relationship skills training for school staff and students.

Types of Consultation Arrangements

Through the use of consultation with mental health and social service agencies, a variety of new and needed activities can be established in rural schools confronting the problems of rapid growth. Consultation can facilitate the school's response to needs of students and families and can build community support for school activities. Consultation with mental health and social service agencies can assume a variety of forms including planning for services and referral arrangements, community education about people problems and available services, use of mental health and social services staff to provide direct services and counseling within the school setting, use of mental health and social services staff to initiate and sponsor group activities and programs within the school setting, and training of teachers in identification, management, and referral of student and family living problems.

The school system is an appropriate catalyst for organizing consultation efforts because of its unique relationship with community residents. Schools are a social system which interacts with the entire rural community either directly through providing education or indirectly through drawing upon community financial, political, and social support. Schools often are a point of high contact between old and new residents. Schools also are organizations with which community residents can affiliate without any stigma

attached to such affiliation. Thus, through the use of consultation in the school setting, human service agencies may reach a larger number of students and families than they would by only providing services in traditional agency settings independent of contacts with schools. Consultation arrangements with mental health and social service agencies provide the rural school with an opportunity to assist the community in confronting rapid growth and to enhance curriculum and educational performance of students. Through the use of consultation, improved working relationships can develop among schools and human service agencies, among schools and community residents, among students and families, among old and new community residents, and among students, faculty, and administrators within the school setting.

Use of Consultation for Teacher Training

Consultation with human service agencies can be used to develop programs for training teachers in counseling skills. Morris (1978) has described such a program established in a rural Oregon school system. A "Counseling with Children" course was developed for teachers. Eight training sessions, each one hour in length, covered topics such as listening and communication, problem identification, classroom problems, contracting, involving parents in problem solving, use of audio-visual materials and simulations, and evaluation. As a result of the course, teachers were better equipped to work with student problems and needs encountered in the classroom.

IV. INTERAGENCY NETWORKS IN THE RAPID GROWTH COMMUNITY

In addition to the use of agency consultation and service development within the school setting, coping with rapid growth requires the

maintenance of an effective network of interagency relationships. Networks provide a structure through which schools and other human service agencies can exchange information and share scarce resources (Sarason, 1977). Informal networks of relationships among school personnel and other human service providers are a common feature of life in rural communities. Under conditions of rapid growth, however, interagency networks may undergo change in both structure and function.

Network Formation

Ideally, interagency network formation can begin prior to the impact of rapid growth through formation of a community planning coalition or resource council (Jirovec, 1979). Participation in a planning process by organizations such as schools, social services, mental health services, churches, recreation departments, police, and health services can identify potential needs and build working relationships. If rapid growth already has occurred, the joint undertaking of a human services needs assessment may be an appropriate strategy for initiating an interagency planning process. Agency staff also might begin the network-building process by meeting together to discuss common problems such as outreach to newcomer families or staff turnover.

The community network system should be well organized and task specific but should not be the property or responsibility of any one social service organization. Before the network can be effective, all the members of the network must acknowledge that each member has a contribution to make and that each member is an expert resource in its unique service area, for example, police--law enforcement, schools--education, children's division of the department of social services--assistance for children and families. The agency network should meet at least once a month and more often if the

situation requires, so as to stay on top of the transition and to function in a planning mode rather than meeting in an atmosphere of crisis reaction and feeling under pressure to put out fires. Often the best place to meet will be a school, because the school is a primary target service of this type of agency network. The key concept related to network success is that the agency network consider the community and its changes as a whole rather than concentrating on the client family cases which all the agencies have in common. Individual problems can be solved, but within the perspective of using potential solutions as examples for service development and delivery rather than as unique responses to each case.

An example of use of such a network system planning process would begin with the school developing a study of several composite families. The composite would be based on common problems, but with information altered so that the families are not individually identifiable. These composites would then be used as cases for which the network would plan services to address the problems which the families are encountering. These family cases would be developed using oldtimers as well as newcomers, single-parent families, low-income families, and minority families. Also, the community transition network could ask for guest speakers from communities already affected by rapid growth and development to meet with the group and discuss problems they have encountered and solutions they have developed. These guest speakers might include industrial developers and politicians as well as representatives from state and federal regulatory agencies and funding sources.

Activities of Interagency Networks

Activities which might be undertaken by interagency networks in

rural communities confronting rapid growth include the following:

1) Interagency training sessions orienting new staff to community needs and services. This function is particularly important since most agencies will experience staff expansion and turnover.

2) Ongoing staff development and training sessions to provide support and to combat the common problem of burnout.

3) Development and ongoing evaluation of interagency agreements to provide referral and emergency services.

4) Interagency training for clerical staff whose responsibilities may expand to include more emphasis on paperwork, information giving and referral, and responding empathically to service requests under conditions of stress.

The formation of interagency networks can strengthen not only the ways in which community services work together under conditions of stress and change but also the ways in which service agencies relate to the rural community of which they are a part. Through joint participation in impact assessment, agencies can unite in support of adequate community services needed to cope with the social and human consequences of rapid growth. Interagency networks can point out common problems which affect their ability to recruit and retain staff, such as lack of available and affordable housing.

Interagency networks can support community planning efforts to deal with the problems of oldtimer-newcomer bifurcation. Recognition of bifurcation as a community problem can reduce the probability that schools will become a primary arena in which conflicts between newcomers and oldtimers are played out. A number of interagency activities can be undertaken

to reduce community bifurcation. These may include the following:

1) Development of a community services directory and newcomer's survival kit which provides information concerning helping resources.

2) Team outreach to newcomer families.

3) Utilization rather than inadvertent displacement of existing community resources, support systems, natural helpers, and volunteer groups. Retired teachers, for example, have been utilized to develop tutorial programs for new students in rapid growth communities.

4) Encouraging community residents to take over some responsibility for maintaining services. Persons who have participated in parenting and family living skills groups, for example, can plan and publicize additional groups.

5) Encouraging communication and discussion of community concerns through printing articles in local newspapers or through publishing a newsletter focused specifically on impacts of rapid growth. Transmitting accurate information and containing rumors is a problem in rapid growth situations; and absence of needed, accurate information can break down informal networks of trust and support which have held a rural community together (Gold, 1979).

V. BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN PLANNING AND DECISION MAKING FOR SCHOOLS IN RAPID GROWTH COMMUNITIES[1]

As the rural community undergoes rapid growth and change, all

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[1] The material in this section is adapted from Lynne Clemmons Morris and Judson H. Morris, Jr., "Preparing Human Service Workers for Practice in Boom Communities," paper presented at the International Symposium of the Human Side of Energy, Laramie, Wyoming, 1980.

residents must acquire new knowledge and coping skills. Persons in leadership positions, in particular, must cope with complex organizational and political problems. More residents make more demands for more varied services. Studies of boom-town life have noted that often there is a complete turnover of persons in administrative positions in rapid growth communities (Cortese and Jones, 1977; Hennigh, 1978). Schools, in particular, are subject to administrative turnover and conflicting community expectations. Thus, the development of new types of leadership and administrative skills, both for persons with identified decision-making responsibilities and for their constituents who sense their growing stake in the extent and form of educational services, seems to be an important training activity which prepares residents to participate in community planning decisions. Simulations can be developed to increase community and administrative capacity for responding to rapid growth planning issues confronting rural schools.

Use of Simulations as Planning Tools

Preparing to cope with rapid growth involves anticipating what may be, for most community members, a wholly new life existence. What will happen to community members and membership as a consequence of rapid economic growth? What types of changes should the community expect? The multiple changes associated with rapid community growth can be broken down into three levels of confrontation: physical changes, social structural changes, and cultural value changes.

Planning in rapid growth communities requires the development of skills for assessing change from different and more holistic perspectives, for trying out the effectiveness of new types of network structures, and for thinking through and vicariously experiencing the consequences of proposed

changes. Simulations are learning activities well suited to enhancing these types of skills. Participants can replay simulated learning experiences assuming different roles, thus enhancing their ability to view the experience from various perspectives. The consequences of interventions can be evaluated from the perspective of trying them out in a low-risk situation. Formation of new types of network structures is easily encouraged.

The need to develop a more holistic perception of the multiple changes which are experienced by the rapid growth community recurs throughout the written accounts and shared personal experiences of community residents. Multiple impacts, changes in quality of life, and sense of loss may not be anticipated. Even obtaining accurate information concerning the extent of growth may be difficult. Simulations of the boom-town experience can build in many of these previously unanticipated consequences.

Simulations are an appropriate technology, highly compatible with models of preparation for human services work which stress a self-help perspective. They are widely used within the field of education. Simulations create a framework which encourages problem solving, but problems are selected, defined, and often redefined by participants themselves. Solutions are not imposed from the outside. Participants can be encouraged to articulate their own solution preferences, to mobilize their own resources, to strengthen working relationships which exist within the boom community, to take on new leadership roles, and to acknowledge the leadership contributions of others. New skills can be tried out in a low-risk environment. Often, greater empathy is developed for persons in high-risk administrative positions, such as school principals and superintendents, within the rapidly changing rural community.

Decision making in rapid growth communities requires not only new knowledge and problem-solving skills, but also the ability to relate to issues of value diversity and value conflict. Influx of newcomers to the community who bring differences in lifestyles, socio-economic status, and technical and professional training expands the community value base. This increase in diversity can be a source of growth or a source of community tension and conflict. Skill in coping with value diversity can be another objective of simulations designed for work with rapid growth communities and is helpful in confronting problems of newcomer-oldtimer bifurcation. The development of new leadership skills for problem solving in a school system coping with rapid growth is the focus of the simulation Rurban High School.

Rurban High School Simulation

This simulation illustrates problems faced by adolescents in a transitional rural high school which is experiencing an incease in numbers of students whose families have migrated from other areas. It has been used by mental health and social service agencies in developing consultation relationships with school personnel in rural communities undergoing population change and its concomitant social and cultural stresses. A maze adapted from a planning exercise developed by Rhodes (1977) is constructed to simulate the problems of planning and responding to changing needs in a rural high school. The maze can be drawn on poster board or constructed with pieces of wood. A diagram of the maze is presented in Figure 1. The simulation can be played with a variety of participants including community residents, parents, school board members, school administrators, teachers, students, and staff of human service agencies.

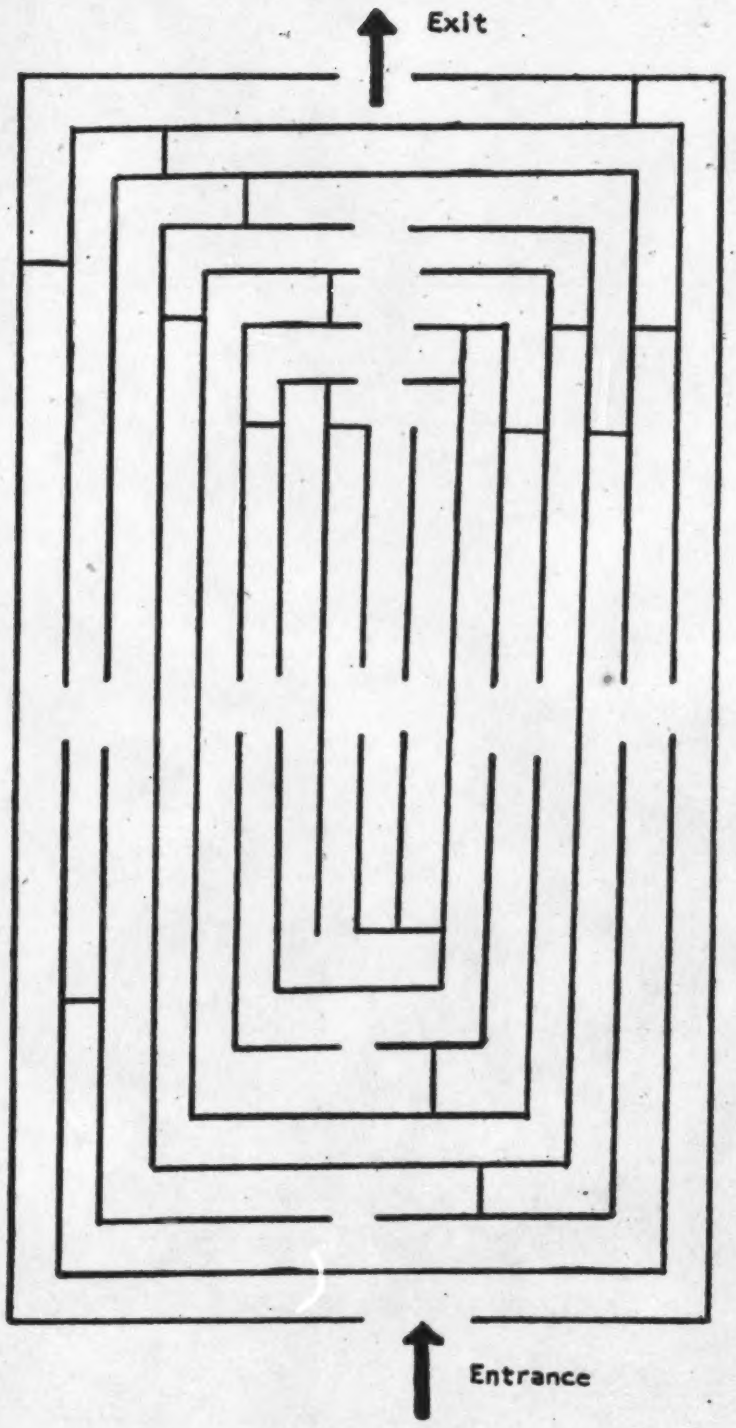

Figure 1

Diagram for Construction of Rurban High School Maze

Rurban High School should be played in at least two phases to be most effective and to have the most impact upon growth of planning skills of community residents. The first phase should be one in which the participants identify the problems, familiarize themselves with the problems as perceived by others, and explore possible solutions. In addition, phase one allows the participants to become comfortable with the technology of simulations and the props of Rurban High School. In the second phase, which should take place approximately one week after phase one, game participants should assume pre-assigned roles and then develop and evaluate solutions from these role perspectives. These roles can be assigned to the participants after the conclusion of phase one. This gives the participants time to learn their new role, think of the problems identified in their community, and develop solutions that a person in the role assigned to them might suggest. Examples of role assignments could be major, council member, human services worker, principal, minority group leader, oldtimer parent, newcomer parent. Phase one and phase two have somewhat different rules to emphasize the different learning and skill requirements for each phase.

Game Directions--Phase One

1. Place the problem cards throughout the Rurban High School maze which you have constructed.

2. Players develop their own additional problem cards based on changes impacting local community schools. These cards also are placed in the Rurban High School maze.

3. Game participants enter the maze at designated points, using a move marker such as a coin or paper clip. Participants also are given a set of 3 x 5 index cards.

4. Game participants all begin to move through the maze and encounter the problem cards. Each time a player encounters a problem card, s/he must write a solution to that problem on an index card.

5. After all the participants have gone through (and gotten out of) the Rurban High School maze and have answered all of the problem cards that they have encountered, the game participants review the problem cards and share their possible solutions with each other.

6. Participants evaluate the feasibility of each of the solutions developed in response to situations encountered in the problem cards.

7. Participants discuss possible implementation of the solution strategies which seem to be most feasible for their local community's school problems.

8. Role assignments for phase two can be made. Participants are encouraged to gather additional information and community reaction to proposed solutions prior to participating in phase two of the simulation.

Game Directions--Phase Two

1. Place the problem cards throughout the Rurban High School maze which you have constructed. Cards should be placed throughout the maze so that participants must encounter the cards as they attempt to move throughout the maze. A suggested set of problem cards follows the game directions.

2. Game participants take one of two types of roles, assigned at the end of phase one. These roles include planners with community decision-making responsibilities (for example, principal, mayor, member of city council) or constituents (parents, students, teachers, community residents). Planners play the game by moving through the maze, writing suggested solutions to problem cards. Constituents observe and evaluate the planners' performances. The game can be played by 10-15 participants. About two thirds of the players should take planner roles.

3. Planners enter the maze at the designated starting points, using a move marker such as a coin or paper clip. They also are given a piece of paper or set of index cards for writing down solutions, which is done for each problem card encountered.

4. Constituents begin play by developing at least one additional problem card based on their own awareness of changes impacting boom community schools.

5. Constituents are then given a set of score cards, used for evaluating a planner's performance. They are instructed to interview the planners and to fill out the score card after the interview. During the interview, constituents should assess the effectiveness with which the planner is coping with the problems confronting community schools. The specific problem card which each constituent has developed should be discussed with the planner during the interview.

Constituents should attempt to interview each planner twice during the game.

6. At the end of each interview, constituents should complete a score card and give it to the planner. Constituents also can place one additional card in the maze during the game.

7. After all the planners have gone through the maze, responding to all problem cards that they have encountered, the game participants review the problem cards, and planners share their proposed solutions with the participants.

8. Participants evaluate the feasibility of each of the solutions developed in response to situations encountered in the problem cards.

9. Constituents discuss the feedback they gave on the score cards, indicating those ways in which planners were performing effectively or might improve their performance.

10. Participants discuss possible implementation of solutions which seem most feasible for dealing with their community's needs.

Problem Cards

1. Energy costs have caused a cutback in the use of school buses for after-school activities.

2. Movement of new students into the community has led to severe overcrowding of schools.

3. The proposed school millage increase has been defeated. Primary opposition has come from long-time residents who oppose higher taxes to support education of newcomers' children.

4. Diverse student body has interests in new and different courses (farm/agriculture, technical/industrial, college preparatory). Can the curriculum be diversified?

5. Because many people are moving into town, there are now many students who do not know each other. Rival student groups are developing such as cowboys, dopers, jocks, and loners. How can students be brought together and a better sense of school identity be developed?

6. Oldtimer teachers complain that they no longer know their students' parents. Oldtimer parents complain that they no longer know their students' teachers.

7. There are now more high school dropouts because there are now more places for them to get jobs (i.e., restaurants, industry, construction).

8. The school board members (mostly oldtimers) are having difficulty responding to interests and ideas of newcomer parents, who want more representation on the school board.

9. It is difficult to get help for children who have problems because the growing community lacks supporting services for the needs of children and families (examples: children's services, mental health, recreation).

10. Because high school advisors now have more paperwork resulting from an increasing number of student transfers, the advisors now have less time for advising and counseling students.

11. Increasing burnout among all school personnel: teachers, counselors, administrators, social workers, secretarial staff.

12. Many students move into or out of the classroom throughout the semester. Teachers do not know students' skill levels, and these may vary depending on the subject area. Often students come and go before their records arrive.

13. Fewer parents are able to attend teacher-parent conferences because of varying work schedules.

14. Increasing class size has resulted in larger classes, less individual attention from teachers, students not always getting the classes they want. Students feel increasingly ignored and depersonalized.

15. You are hiring a new teacher for Rurban High School. You want someone who can deal with the difficulties of working and living in a rapid growth community what qualities would you look for?

16. Write your own problem card.

The performance of players in planning and decision-making roles can be evaluated by constituents using the Planner's Score Card shown in Figure 2.

VI. THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN RURAL COMMUNITIES CONFRONTING RAPID GROWTH

In confronting the impacts associated with rapid growth, rural communities require adequate information for purposes of planning. The development of processes which stimulate community participation and build

Planner's Score Card

_____ Planner has developed a feasible solution to this problem.

_____ Planner seems on top of the situation, seeking new information, new ideas, new ways of dealing with problems and making clear decisions.

_____ Planner seems to be fair and open minded. Does not appear to favor one group more than others.

_____ Planner has listened attentively to my views and seems to understand my concerns.

Ratings:

++ = good, two points

\+ = adequate, one point

\- = inadequate, no points

_____ Total Score

Figure 2

Planner's Score Card

skills for coping with new problems also plays a critical role in rural community response to rapid growth. Thus, education in rural communities can be viewed not only in terms of academic instruction provided to school-age children but also in terms of a community-development function affecting all residents. A model of the rural school as a community development corporation

has been suggested for rural areas experiencing economic stagnation and population decline (Moe and Tamblyn, 1974; Sher, 1977). A model of comprehensive education serving a community-planning-and-development function also is applicable for rural communities confronting rapid economic and population growth.

A New Mission for Rural Education

Bradshaw and Blakely have stressed the need for a new mission for rural schools in an advanced industrial society characterized by population growth in non-metropolitan areas. "In the advanced industrial society, the role of the educational establishment changes from providing terminal training early in life to providing lifelong resources to meet community goals, acquiring on the way more capacity to respond to change" (Bradshaw and Blakely, 1979:71-72). To carry out this mission of increasing community adaptive capacity, Bradshaw and Blakely have developed a model of educational planning which is organized around four major functions: goal-setting processes which result in determination of individual and community objectives, opportunities for experiential learning which increases coping skills, integrative learning which breaks down stereotypes and barriers, and development of new systems for meeting individual and community needs.

This new mission also suggests a new clientele for rural educational systems. The mission of increased community capacity for responding to change suggests educational activities available to all age groups.

Particular educational needs of different age groups suggested in studies of rapid growth communities are synthesized in Table 3. Taken together, these recommendations can be used to develop a comprehensive plan for addressing educational needs throughout the community. Residents

Table 3

Educational Needs of Age Groups in Rural Communities Confronting Rapid Growth

Age Group	Educational Needs
Preschool Children	Screening to identify needs. Quality child care providing enrichment.
School-Age Children	After-school recreational programs. Newcomer-oldtimer integration. Screening to identify needs. Family life-coping skills. Information--school newsletter.
Teenagers	Newcomer-oldtimer integration. Recreational opportunities. Work-study programs. Coping with adult roles. Peer counseling. School participation in decision making and planning. Career counseling. Vocational education. Information—school newsletter.
Adults	GED program. Vocational education to prepare for new employment opportunities. Community education emphasizing planning skills. Leadership development. Adult education as a support system for newcomers. Community history and information. Skills in parenting, family living, coping with stress. Hobby, craft, and self-reliance skills.
Elderly	Community education emphasizing planning skills. Community history—roles as carriers of culture. Volunteer roles in schools and human service agencies.

in all age groups can be offered the opportunity to acquire information and skills needed for effective living in the changing rural community.

Educational Needs of Age Groups

Preschool Children. Recommendations for educational needs of preschool children in rapid growth communities have emphasized screening clinics and quality child care. Comprehensive screening clinics identifying educational, social, and health needs may be used to organize services, particularly those directed toward newcomers' families. Such multi-service clinics could be established through the use of interagency planning and service teams. Without the establishment of comprehensive screening clinics, entry into the school system becomes the primary point at which social, health, and educational needs of children are identified. Early screening can result in prevention of problems which affect children's development and future functioning in the school setting and can shift primary responsibility for identification of needs from the school system to a shared interagency service.

Quality child care providing social and educational enrichment and relieving family stress is a major need in rapid growth communities. Evening work shifts and long commutes to work in some communities may require child-care services with extended hours. Coordination of services also is possible through use of arrangements such as day care centers and evening home care. Shortage of any type of child care is a common problem, however. Cooperative day-care arrangements, particularly among newcomers, can be encouraged and facilitated by a human services planning team. Such arrangements can include opportunities for educational enrichment such as a preschool drama program reported by Davenport and Davenport (1980).

Teenage baby-sitting services can be coordinated through the schools.

School-Age Children. Through curriculum development, schools in rapid growth communities can respond to the needs of a diverse student population. Involving students in actual planning for response to rapid growth can increase skills and awareness of community needs and reduce newcomer-oldtimer bifurcation. Students might, for example, plan activities which could introduce newcomers to the community. Special friends programs which pair old and new students and families have been developed in some communities. Quality after-school care arrangements need to be developed. Need for after-school recreational programs and classes emphasizing family life-coping skills should be assessed on an ongoing basis. The school newsletter can be used to provide students and families with needed community information and to introduce newcomer students to the community. Student newspapers and opportunities for creative writing are vehicles through which students can express the impact of rapid change on their own lives.

Teenagers experience multiple impacts of rapid growth resulting from their roles as students, family members, and, frequently, members of an expanding work force. Developing roles for students in school processes of planning for impacts is consistent with new family and work responsibilities which teenagers may be assuming in the community. Student body involvement in curriculum and program expansion can promote newcomer-oldtimer interaction. Peer counseling programs can introduce newcomers to school and community. Conflicting pressures to assume family, work, and educational responsibilities can be addressed through the development of work-study programs and expanded career counseling. Courses in family living, career planning, and money management can assist students in coping with

conditions of rapid economic development. Cross-age tutoring programs can reduce newcomer isolation and give all teenagers an opportunity to assume helper roles in the community.

Increased diversity within the student body has been identified as a positive impact of rapid growth in rural communities. Schools can take advantage of student-body diversity through planning for curriculum expansion, developing extra-curricular activities, and using cultural diversity to enhance curriculum content. Courses in history or literature, for example, might highlight regions in which newcomers have lived previously. The history of other rapid growth communities can be studied, and visits to such communities have been undertaken by some school systems. Student newspapers can report on rapid growth impacts and can publish interviews focused on residents' perceptions of community change.

Adults. In rapid growth communities, adults experience the need for life-long learning--a model of adult education focused on new information, skills, and human development required for living in a changing world. School-system support of a community planning process provides citizens with opportunities to participate in vital decisions affecting the community's future, encourages leadership development, educates in the areas of planning and political skills, and can reduce community bifurcation. Vocational education programs can be developed which prepare adults for new employment opportunities within the community. Such courses can be particularly important in enabling minorities and women to secure employment benefits from economic development. Interagency staff development and training programs can assist public and human service providers in acquiring needed skills and in coping with high levels of service need. Adult-education classes can

serve as support systems for newcomers and can build social skills of highly mobile families. Classes on parenting, family living, and coping with stress can help individuals respond to the demands of a turbulent environment. Colleges can offer regional workshops on leadership-development skills for business and civic leaders, elected officials, and agency administrators.

Older Persons. In many rural communities older persons constitute a high proportion of the population. Since the elderly may not benefit from employment opportunities, they are often a segment of the community which has little to gain and much to lose as a consequence of rapid growth. Increased isolation of the elderly has been noted as a problem in rapid growth communities (Gold, 1979). Coping with superinflation on fixed incomes is a particularly important impact which has been dealt with in some communities through providing special discount cards to senior citizens. Older residents may be understandably reluctant to support increased property taxes and school-bond issues in rapid growth communities. Thus, school systems need to support community planning processes which give attention to the impacts of rapid growth on elderly residents.

Older persons constitute an important community resource which can be utilized by the school system. As carriers of community tradition and culture, the elderly can develop school-sponsored courses on community history. Such classes acknowledge important roles played by oldtimers in the community's development and orient newcomers to community life. Older persons can also provide volunteer services, such as tutorial assistance and Foster Grandparents, which assist overloaded schools and human service agencies. Conversely, students can be involved in services and activities for older persons, such as hot meals programs.

VII. SUMMARY

In summary, rapid growth results in multiple impacts for the rural school and the community in which it is located. Stress and change occur in relationships among schools and various community systems with which schools interact. Population growth and mobility, rapid economic development, family stress, community bifurcation, and interagency network building all place demands upon the rural school. Accurate impact assessment, planning and the acquisition of funding resources, support for community participation in the planning process, using human service agency resources through use of consultation and networking, and a perspective emphasizing the community development functions of educational institutions are essential components of a rural school's strategy for meeting educational needs in rural communities confronting rapid growth.

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